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1962/10/24

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TELCON
The President
Ball
10/24/62, 10:45 p.m.

Pres. - I have had this letter read to me. Should we answer ~~that~~ that?

Ball - There is no point ~~in answering~~ to answer it until we see what happens tomorrow morning. Bob McNamara says thing which they are likely to get tomorrow is a tanker and we will halt it and ask it where it is going.

Pres. - If it does not respond?

Ball - Then we stop it. There really is not a we answer here.

Pres. - ~~sympathetic~~ sympathetic.

Ball - I don't think we should hesitate at all.

Pres. - Appeal to reasoning, but I wouldn't know whether we might give that back to him. I wouldn't want to hesitate. It seems to me that this record will be published. my two letters to him and his two to me. This is a sympathetic appeal. Imagine what you would do if you were in my position. Who have we got around here who can ~~xi~~ write a letter?

Ball - Harlan Cleveland is here and myself. We can do that.

Pres. - It wouldn't have to be too long. "As I stated in my speech, reassurances that these weapons are not being sent. That is the reason we are taking this stand, and it is a source of regret to me." This thing is supposed to come through at 2 am.....;

Ball - The way the ~~situation~~ situation stands is that the ship which we would stop is a tanker. We are not authorized to board or take any action .if the boat refuses to stop.

Pres. - Let's assume that this tanker is not going to stop for us. We ought to have a first case a tanker or another ship, a cargo ship.

Ball - He sent all the cargo ships back and left in this situation. Unless we make an ~~issue~~ issue of the first ship, they will think in Moscow that we have chickened out. Let me talk further with McNamara about that ~~the~~ tonight.

005, Ball Papers,
Lot 740272,
Telcoms-Cuba